

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, January 6. 1711.

Si Cæci effetis non haberetus Peccatum; nunc vero dicitis Videmus, manet Peccatum.

IN These Dangerous Times, it is a very hard Task for an Author that writes from Principle to behave, and Truth runs a great Risque of displeasing both Sides.

If a Writer would be strictly Impartial, he must Censure the Errors of the Time, wherever he finds them; and where are the People that will bear to be told they take a false Step? — Nor is it possible for a Man to write against the Follies of one Side, but they presently cry he is Writing for the other; this is the Grosset

Mistake Men can commit, and the most Unjust; it makes either Side appear fond of themselves, either Side furious at the Reprover. If I Reproach the High Flying Party, with Swearing to day to the Queen, and drinking Healths to Morrow to the Pretender; If I tell them this is the blackest Perjury in the Nation, and that the Jacobites, Papists, and most profest'd Enemies of the Government, abhor it — What is the Consequence? A Damn'd Whig, a Notorious Whig, a Rogue, a Presbyterian, be ought to be Hang'd; these are the best Terms

Terms can be gotten from them — If I tell the Whigs, they have been in the wrong, to talk of running down Credit; that they Ruin'd their own Estates, And gratify'd *France*, Encourag'd Jacobitism, and laid the Foundation, to lessen their own Figure — Away my good Friends S — t T —, and W — g run with it — He is turn'd about, gone over, chang'd Sides, and I know not what — If I do not dash my Brains out against the Stone Walls of *St. Stephen's Chappel*, a Knot of Honest, but Ignorant People, will have me be an Approver of the New Measures, tho' not a Man among them, nor a Man for them, has dar'd to speak Truth more plainly, and more directly, as I have done; again, if I speak of the Mischief of High Flying, of the Madnes of the Tory Party, D — n the Villain, said a Tory the other Day, and threw a Bottle at my Head in the dark, but durst not stay, and let the World know that he had a Name, or could own an Action so base — Thus, Gentlemen, ungratefully Censur'd by one Side, Assassinated by another, Threatned by a Third, and unjustly used by all; — I go on yet, telling you plainly your Errors of Management, as well of one Side as the other, and not a Man stands up, and says, he does not speak Truth, or offers to Confute what is said.

Where is the Man, even among the Tory Party, or the worst of High Flyers, that dares say, Abjuring the Pretender, and drinking his Health, is to be justify'd, or can be defended; That Swearing to the Queen, and Embracing her Majesty's Enemy, is Conscient either with Loyalty, with Faith, or with an Honest Man? — Let us see the Man that will defend it — Even the *Reboursal*, when this Question was formerly put to him, own'd they were to be compar'd only to that Set of Men, that he himself accounted the greatest Traytors on Earth.

Where is the Man, even among the High Flying Clergy, that will stand forth, and say, that there is no need of reviving Discipline in the *Church of England*, That a

Minister ought to be allow'd to Preach and Blaspheme, to Administer the Holy Sacrament with Hands Defil'd with innumerable Debaucheries? That the Clergy may, consistent with their Office, and the Service of the Altar, Swear, be Drunk, commit Whoredom, Adultery, Incest, &c. and that such as these should not be blam'd, expos'd, or censur'd, nor the Ecclesiastick Authority be censur'd for neglecting them?

Where is the Man, that will tell me, we shogid not uphold our Credit, and keep up the Value of our own Estates? But in Compliance with the Wishes of *France*, the Hopes of the Pretender, and the Endeavours of the *Jacobites*, should run down our Stocks, sink our Properties, bauk our Annuities, and destroy the Publick Credit; That we should sink the Ship, because we do not like the Pilots, and drown our Families, because we are not pleas'd with our Masters.

I could never yet see a Man that would deny any of these, and yet this *Review* is to be the Mark of all your Fury, for saying what you cannot refrain acknowledging to be Justice — And now, Gentlemen, let me give you a Test of my Usage by every Side, as a Tryal of the Justice of your National Tewper, at this Time.

It is but lately, that I troubled the World with a Complaint of the barbarous Usage I met with, from Villains waiting and watching for me, under pretence of Officers to Arrest, tho' without any Warrant, and whether to Murder, or deliver me up to them that should, is like, for want of Justice, to remain in a Secret.

I took up lately one of these Fellows, it appear'd he was no Officer, it appear'd he had no Warrant, or Authority to Arrest — But had gotten a sham Writ with a Name to it, of which, none of that Name, ever had the least Concern with me — This Villain I had long pursu'd, and at last Apprehended — He had taken Money of a Man Employ'd by me, formerly to Treat with him, believing him then to have been an Officer; he begg'd, confess'd, offer'd

to refund the Money, and pay the Charges — But not discovering his Accomplices, he is carried before a Justice of the Peace, not a Hundred Mile from Sir H—— y B——ld's — The Justice when he had heard the first Complaint, and then not knowing the Person, readily granted his Warrant — The Case was so black, he could not but resolve to punish it — The Rogue is brought before him, a Lawyer appears, makes out the Fact, and the Justice discover'd some Indignation at the Crime ; but as soon as he heard it was Daniel de Foe, Author of the Review, he calls the Gentleman that Pleaded it, tho' as Honest a Gentleman as himself, and by the Way, no Whig, A ROGUE ; Discharges the Warrant, and bids the Villain keep the Money — Which for all that, he shall not do, nor shall the Justice himself, escape the shame of his Partiality, who has given Orders to a Cheat, to keep what he own'd to have unjustly gotten ; Excellent Justice to make a Nation Flourish !

Well, this is on one Side — On Board of a Ship I have Loaded some Goods, the Master is a Whig, of a kind more particularly than Ordinary — He comes to the Port, my Bill of Loading is produc'd, my Title to my Goods Undisputed — No Claim, no Pretence — But my Goods cannot be found — The Ship Sail'd again, and I am told my Goods are carry'd back again, in the same Ship — And all the Reason given is, they belong to De Foe, Author of the Review — And he is turn'd about, and Writes for keeping up the Publick Credit.

Thus, Gentlemen, I am ready to be Assassinated, Arrested without Warrant, Robb'd and Plunder'd by all Sides, I can neither Trade nor live, and what is this for ?

Only as I can yet see, because there being Faults on both Sides, I tell both Sides of it too plainly.

What now can these Things be resolv'd into ? — I confess it seems to me, like the Mystery the Apostle tells us of in the Scripture — That Blindness in part is happen'd to Israel, till the fullness of the Gentiles be come in ; Rom. XI. 25.

And since Discoursing Allegorically is become suitable to the Times — Give me leave, Gentlemen, to make a brief Excursion here, about the Plague that seems just now to have overspread this Island ; how far it may extend, how far worse it is, than the Contagion in Sweden, or Poland ; how Universal it is how Fatal, how Mortal to our Peace, and at last, how Curable, and by what Means, I may hereafter Enquire — This Distemper, which I now call the Island's Plague, is the Modern Mischief of National Blindness.

That kind of Blindness, which our Occulists call *Gesta Serena*, is, as they say, the hardest to Cure ; that is, when the Eye looks fair, the Sight of it clear, all the out-side unaffected, but a Filmy Cloud perfectly darkens the Sight, and the Body is quite blind.

I should think nothing of our Blindness, if at the same time our Eyes were not open — No natural Impediment appears in our Politick Opiticks ; the Age is awake, their Senses pretend to be in Exercise, their Eyes seem clear, their pretences to sight are more than ever, for while you live, the more Ignorance, the greater Claim to Knowledge ; and for this Reason, our Saviour says of Old, to a People posses'd with the same Distemper, If ye were blind you should have no Sin ; but now you say we see, therefore your Sin remains.

AD VERTISE MENT.

 **T**HE Author of this Paper having receiv'd many importunate Letters a long time, pressing him to go on with his so often promis'd Discourses upon Trade — Gives this Notice.

That having often Essay'd to carry on a continu'd Discourse upon Trade in this Paper, but been unavoidably prevented by the Fury of the times, an unhappiness the Author did not foresee when this Work was undertaken —

And

And finding it impossible to have his Essays upon Trade pursu'd in this Paper, in such an uninterrupted Manner as a Subject of that Consequence requires; some Gentlemen, who desire that Work to be carried on, have made a Proposal, for the Writing a REVIEW to be entirely taken up upon the Subject of Trade, with a Miscellany, or a part reserv'd to handle Particular Cases in Trade. — And expressly condition'd not to meddle with Masters of State, Divisions of Parties, or any thing relating to the Affairs of Government, Civil or Ecclesiastick.

This Work is propos'd to be Subscib'd by such Gentleman as think fit to encourage it, 'till it may be able to support it self; in which the Author hopes he may please you all, and may have an opportunity to lay down the unpleasant Subject of the Nation's Division: & a Thing he has long been desirous.

The Proposals shall be consider'd in this Paper, as soon as it is brought to a Consideration, Mean time any Gentlemen that are willing to Encourage such a Work, may let the Author know it by Letter, or such Method as they think fit.

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